

[24 November, 2006]

RAJYASABHA

Season 2007-08 has been increased to Rs. 750 per quintal, which is Rs. 100 more compared to Rs. 650/- per quintal announced in RMS 2006-07.

Alternatively, policy options to procure sufficient quantity of wheat for meeting the requirement of TPDS and welfare schemes in the event of market prices being above the MSP has been envisaged.

Offtake of sugar and other food items

†307. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS? FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details and quantity of sugar and other food items lying unused in the godowns of the country as on date due to non lifting of these items; and

(b) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The State Government or their nominated agencies are responsible to lift allotted quantity of levy sugar, wheat and rice for distribution in the Public Distribution System. If allotted quantities remains unlified, the same are re-allotted. Hence, the stocks do not remain unused. However, as per available information, the stock position of sugar (including levy sugar), wheat and rice is as under:

Item	Quantity (in lac tons)	As on
Sugar	43.64	30.09.2006
Wheat	64.42	31.10.2006
Rice	59.70	31.10.2006

New Environment Policy

308. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether New National Environment Policy has been adopted by Government;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the salient features of the Policy;

(c) whether there is a provision for deforestation for development activities like construction of roads to establish links among the towns and villages;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the Policy is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir. The National Environment Policy (NEP), 2006 was approved by the Union Cabinet on 18.5.06 and it is available on the website (<http://www.envfor.nic.in>) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests.

(b) The NEP, 2006 is a response to our national commitment to a clean environment, mandated in the constitution. It recognizes that maintaining a health environment is not the State's responsibility alone, but also that of every citizen. The NEP is also intended to help realize sustainable development by mainstreaming environmental concerns in all development activities. It briefly describes key environmental challenges currently and prospectively facing the country, the objectives of the Policy, normative principles underlying policy action, strategic themes for intervention, broad indication of the legislative and institutional development needed to accomplish the strategic themes, and mechanisms for implementation and review.

(c) and (d) The NEP seeks to increase forest and tree cover through afforestation of degraded forest land, wastelands and tree cover on private or revenue lands. It seeks to restrict the diversion of dense natural forest to non-forest purposes only to site specific cases of vital national interest. The policy also seeks to give due consideration to the quality and productivity of land which are proposed to be converted for development activities as part of the environmental clearance process.

(e) The Policy outlines a significant number of new and continuing initiatives for enhancing environmental conservation, which require coordinated action by diverse actors, and preparation of Action Plans on identified themes by the concerned agencies at all levels of Government—Central, State/UT and Local. The concerned Ministries/Departments in

[24 November, 2006]

RAJYASABHA

the Central Government are required to prepare Action Plans and encourage the State Governments/UT Administrations to undertake similar action.

Illegal trade of tigers

309. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of tigers in India show an alarming decline as the tiger has big value in medicine market;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Chinese Medicine Market (TCM) is driving the poaching boom as every part of the tiger from tail to whiskers has a market; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to curb the trade and save the tiger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) There is a report of disappearance of tigers from the Sariska Tiger Reserve, and a decline in tiger population in the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve from 35 in 2001-02 to 26 in 2005 as reported by the State (Rajasthan). While no further reports of decline in tiger population in tiger reserves has been received from States, the ongoing All India Estimation of tiger, copredators and prey animals using the refined methodology approved by the Tiger Task Force, would provide the factual status of tiger population in the country including National Parks, Sanctuaries and Tiger Reserves.

(b) and (c) No such report has come to notice. However steps taken by the Government of India for conservation of wild animals including tiger are given in the Statement (see below).

Statement

Measures taken for Tiger Conservation by Government of India .

1. Ongoing Funding Schemes:

Funding and technical help are provided to States under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of "Project Tiger", "Assistance to National Parks & Sanctuaries" and "Project Elephant" for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of States to provide effective protection to wild animals including tiger.